Group on Counter-terrorism established in January 2000. Since September 11, the two sides have discussed all aspects of global terrorism, including the cross border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir, at various levels, including in the meeting between Prime Minister and U.S. President George Bush on 9 November, 2001 and between Minister of External affairs and U.S. Secretary of State Collin Powell. Both sides agree that the war against terrorism will be a long and multi-faceted one.

Visits by Indians to Get Support to Fight Terrorism

†1889. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several people from India have gone abroad for gathering support to fight against terrorism after 11th September, 2001;

(b) if so, the name of the persons who have gone abroad and the counrtries as well as the dates of their visits;

(c) whether any scheme has been formulated within the country prior to visits by those persons to eliminate terrorism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) over the last several years, India has played an active role in drawing the attention of the international community to the need for comprehensive, coordinated, sustained and well integrated international cooperation to combat terrorism. In the post September 11 period, there is increased acceptance that terrorism is a global phenomenon; its destructive reach and lethal potential has been enhanced by global networks of illicit trafficking in drugs, money laundering and arms smuggling.

The issue of international terrorism, in particular cross border

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

terrorism, has been taken up in all our bilateral interactions. This issue was discussed during Prime Minister, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee's visits to USSR (November 4.7, 2001), USA (Washington november 8-9, 2001, New York, November 10-11, 2001) and UK (November 12-13, 2001). It was discussed also during the visits of External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh, to France (September 28-30, 2001), USA (Washington, October 1-2, 2001), UK (October 3, 2001), Germany (October 4-5, 2001), USSR (November 4-7, 2001), USA (Washington, November 8-9, 2001, New York, November 10-14, 2001), and Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Omar Abdullah to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (September 12-18, 2001), Maldives (October 3-5, 2001), Belgium (October 15-16, 2001), Zambia (October 22-24, 2001), Kenya (October 25-26, 2001), Belarus (November 15-17, 2001), South Africa (November 27-29, 2001), and Ukraine (November 30 — December 3, 2001).

As part of our efforts to combat terrorism, India has taken the initiative to circulate a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to plug the loopholes and gaps that arose from the sectoral conventions on terrorism. This draft Convention, aimed at strenthening international cooperation to combat international terrorism, calls on all States to adopt measures to ensure that criminal acts within the scope of the Convention are, under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature. The Convention also calls on all States to take all practicable measures to prohibit the establishement and operation of terrorist installations and training camps, and to either prosecute or extradite terrorists. At the 54th session of the UNGA, in 1999, it was decided that the Indian draft Comprehensive Convention would be taken up for discussion in the Sixth Committee of the United Nations. Three rounds of discussions have taken place since October 2000. Agreement has been reached on most aspects of the Convention. The Secretary General has also held informal consultations to ensure expeditious finalisation of the Convention. Negotiations are continuing.